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Nutrition Action Healthletter (ISSN 0885-7792)
is published 10 times a year (monthly except
bi-monthly in Jan./Feb. and Jul./Aug.).

POSTMASTER: Send changes to Nutrition
Action Healthletter, 1875 Connecticut Ave.,
N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009-5728.

Application to mail at Periodical postage rates
approved at post office of Washington, DC,
and at additional offices.

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The cost for a one-year subscription or gift
(10 issues) is \$24; two years are \$42. For bulk
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NEWS FROM CSPI

Irradiate This

One way to eliminate *E. coli* and other potentially harmful bacteria in ground beef, chicken, and other foods is to irradiate them.

Irradiation's big plus: It kills bugs dead. But there are a few reasons to be concerned about the process. It involves moving radioactive material around the country—always a risky proposition. And it doesn't prevent sloppy handling at the plant, at home, or in restaurants, which could recontaminate food after it's been zapped.

Whether you can't wait to buy irradiated beef and other products or you're determined to avoid them, one thing is clear: Consumers need to be able to identify irradiated foods at the supermarket and in restaurants. That's what nine out of ten people said in a nationally representative telephone poll of 1,000 adults that we commissioned in June of 1996.

If you agree, please write or e-mail the officials listed below and tell them that irradiated foods need to carry a prominent disclosure, in easy-to-read type, on the front of the package. Thank you.

Thomas J. Billy, FSIS Administrator
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Rm. 331-E
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250
(Tom.Billy@usda.gov)

Jane E. Henney, FDA Commissioner
(see coupon for address and e-mail)

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Unconscientious Resisters

Antibiotics kill bacteria. That's why they save lives...except when they don't work.

Here's at least part of the problem: Antibiotics are routinely fed to cattle, hogs, and poultry to make them grow faster. That major—and unnecessary—use boosts the odds that bacteria will become immune to antibiotics. And if you happen to get an infection caused by one of those resistant bacteria, the antibiotic your doctor prescribes could be useless. That could kill you.

We have filed a petition with the Food and Drug Administration asking that medically useful antibiotics be banned from animal feed. You can help by signing and mailing this coupon or, better yet, by writing or e-mailing in your own words.

To: Commissioner Jane E. Henney
Parklawn Building, Rm. 14-71
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
(JHENNEY@oc.fda.gov)

From:

MRS. MARY SCHULTE

4434 HARVARD ROAD,
DETROIT, MICH., 48224.

As a member of the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), I urge you to save human lives by banning the use of medically useful antibiotics in animal feed. Adding antibiotics to feed in order to promote growth can make bacteria resistant to those antibiotics. And that can leave physicians with no way to treat life-threatening bacterial infections in humans. That's why I support the petition filed by CSPI.

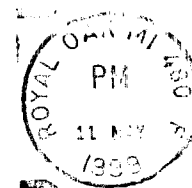
The contents of NAH are not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained from a qualified health professional.

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Design and production by The Page Group, Bethesda, Maryland.
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The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is the non-profit health-advocacy group that publishes Nutrition Action Healthletter. CSPI mounts educational programs and presses for changes in government and corporate policies.

M. SCHULTE
4434 HARVARD ROAD,
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48224.



COMMISSIONER JANE E. HENNEY
PARKLAWN BUILDING,
5600 FISHERS LANE,
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND, 20857.

